

# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** December 1, 2000 (BOS Mtg. 12/19/00)

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Daniel M. Stuck, County Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Transportation Enhancement Program Applications for the Yorktown Capital Improvement Program

### ISSUE

Staff is requesting authorization and endorsement of two applications for funding assistance through the Transportation Enhancement Program. The first application is for a request of \$1,500,000 for proposed improvements to the Yorktown Wharf area. The second application is for a request of \$1,000,000 for proposed Riverwalk improvements referred to as the "Historic Yorktown Beach Trail" which is located west of the wharf area project.

### CONSIDERATIONS

1. The federally authorized Transportation Enhancement Program provides opportunities for a variety of transportation system "enhancements" that improve aesthetics, provide quality-of-life benefits, or that better integrate transportation projects into communities and the natural environment. It is through this program that the County was awarded \$528,000 in 1994 to assist in the construction of the Riverwalk and, in 1999, \$550,000 to assist in the Wharf-Area Improvements project. The 1999 project award represented approximately one-third of the \$1.5 million requested by the County. As noted above, this year's proposed request for the wharf area is for \$1,500,000 and for the beach trail is \$1,000,000.

The Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program is administered by the Virginia Department of Transportation, and project funding decisions are made through an application evaluation process conducted by VDOT and ultimately approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

2. Approximately \$18.5 million is anticipated to be available for distribution during this year's funding cycle. There is a requirement that at least 20% of the total cost of a project be covered by local funds (i.e. - 80% federal/20% local). The program is not a "grant" but rather is structured to provide reimbursement to the applicant for eligible project expenditures, up to the authorized amount. Applications for funding under this year's program must be submitted by January 31, 2001.
3. The approved Yorktown Capital Improvements Program includes the following elements of the "Wharf and Waterfront Interpretive Area" that are included in the application for funding for the wharf area project under the Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program:
  - Building Renovation — One of the major elements of the improvement plan is the movement of the Freight Shed (former Post Office) from the Wharf to a location closer to Water

Street. The cost of this move will be funded through the \$550,000 Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program funding awarded in 1999 and through tourism funding. Once moved and placed on a new foundation, the building is to be renovated and outfitted as an “open-air” exhibit hall focusing on the history of waterborne commerce in Yorktown. The renovation work would be funded through the 2001 Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program and through tourism funding.

- Wharf Demolition/Shoreline Stabilization — Once the Freight Shed is relocated, the Wharf is to be demolished and the shoreline further stabilized with additional breakwater construction and sand nourishment. Plans for this work are complete. This work will also be funded through the \$550,000 Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program funding awarded in 1999 and through tourism funding.
  - Pier and Observation Deck Construction — A major component of the waterfront improvement plan involves the construction of a new pier capable of accommodating a variety of vessels. The proposed pier will extend out approximately 250 feet from the foot of Ballard Street and will be in a “T” shape to provide docking opportunities on the landward and channel sides. The pier will be capable of docking dinner cruise boats, passenger cruise lines, tall-ships, recreational/pleasure craft, and even a Coast Guard cutter. In addition, an observation deck is planned in the location of the Wharf once it is demolished. The new pier and observation deck is included in the approved Yorktown Capital Improvements Program during fiscal year 2002 at a cost of \$2.8 million. The approved Yorktown Capital Improvement Program anticipates using an IDA bond to fund the \$2.8 million needed for the pier. If we are successful in securing adequate funding from 2001 Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program or from other sources, we will reduce the amount of funding needed from the IDA bond. Staff also is planning on submitting applications for grants administered by other agencies to help pay the costs of the pier construction.
  - Public Plaza — A landscaped public plaza is proposed in the area generally bounded by the new pier, the relocated Freight Shed, and the existing restroom building. This plaza will include a terraced performance area, extensive brick walkways, granite seating areas, and extensive landscaping. The construction of the public plaza would be funded through the 2001 Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program and through tourism funding.
  - Parking — The success of the commercial space, the pier, and the plaza will be dependent on the availability of adequate parking. The plans propose the construction of a small lot adjacent to the relocated Freight Shed, and additional parking between this area and the Coleman Bridge. The proposed parking in the wharf area would be funded through the 2001 Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program and through tourism funding.
4. The approved Yorktown Capital Improvements Program includes the following elements that are included in the application for funding for the Historic Yorktown Beach Trail project under the Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program:
- Shoreline Protection: This project involves a major phase of the shoreline stabilization effort. It is intended to restore and stabilize the shoreline extending from the Watermen’s Museum

vicinity westward to the Ferris House vicinity. Included will be several additional stone breakwaters, and nourishment of the beach behind these structures. A major benefit of the project will be the protection provided to a segment of the Water Street right-of-way. The project will also involve replacement of the culvert under Water Street that provides the outlet for Yorktown Creek to the river

- Riverwalk - Victory Center Connection - This project extends the Riverwalk from the Watermen's Museum vicinity to the Victory Center along the York River shoreline, through the Ferris House (NPS) property, and across to the Victory Center ticket building. The project is dependent on completion of the shoreline stabilization work in this area and also on NPS approval of the routing.
5. Most of the project elements contained in the grant application for the Historic Yorktown Beach Trail are not scheduled in the approved Yorktown Capital Improvements Program until FY 2003 (Shoreline Stabilization) and FY 2005 (Riverwalk). Nonetheless, the project elements are important to efforts to revitalize Yorktown and should be completed as soon as the funding can be secured in order to meet our objectives of being ready prior to 2006. If the grant application is approved, staff will bring the opportunity to the Board for consideration along with a recommendation on how the County's matching share could be funded.
  6. It is unlikely that the County will be successful in receiving the total amount of the funding requests. The staff has reviewed the history of project approvals since the inception of the Enhancements Program in 1993 and has found that the largest single award was \$1.5 million (most have been substantially less than \$500,000). However, some localities have been awarded funding spread over the course of several years for the same project, and the sum of those awards has been significant. If asked by VDOT to prioritize its funding requests, the staff recommends that the Wharf Area project be considered the top priority.
  7. Successful implementation of the approved Yorktown Capital Improvements Program anticipates receiving an additional \$500,000 from the Virginia Transportation Enhancement Program.
  8. The final paragraph in proposed Resolution No. R00-209 and Resolution No. R00-212 contains language required by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) committing the County to repay VDOT for any expenditure on a project that the County subsequently elects to cancel. In this regard, it is important to note that the Board will have an opportunity to decide whether or not to accept a project funding award, if it is offered, and before any expenditures are made. As part of this future action, the Board would specifically approve the source and amount of any local matching funds necessary to proceed with the project.
  9. For your reference, staff has enclosed a brief description and related drawings to further describe the proposed projects. Prior to the submission deadline of January 31, 2001, the application package will be completed and enhanced with color graphics, maps, any letters of support that may be received, and other pertinent materials.
  10. The projects have been submitted for endorsement by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as required by VDOT procedures. The MPO endorsed the wharf area project last

year.

#### RECOMMENDATION

The Transportation Enhancement Program provides a good opportunity to secure non-County funding for implementation of major elements of the Yorktown improvement effort. The projects are described in the adopted Yorktown Master Plan and were refined and re-affirmed in the July 1998 *Focus on Yorktown II - the Wharf* workshop. The projects will complement the Riverwalk, also funded through the Enhancement Program, and will dramatically transform and improve the focal point of the Yorktown waterfront. The projects both meet the eligibility requirements for Enhancement Program funding.

I recommend that the Board authorize submission of the application for \$1.5 million for the wharf area project through the adoption of proposed Resolution R00-209. I also recommend that the Board authorize submission of the application for \$1,000,000 for the Historic Yorktown Beach Trail project through the adoption of proposed Resolution R00-212.

Kraus/5200

#### Attachments:

- Application Summaries
- Proposed Resolution R00-209
- Proposed Resolution R00-212